

HEALTHY HARFORD, INC.

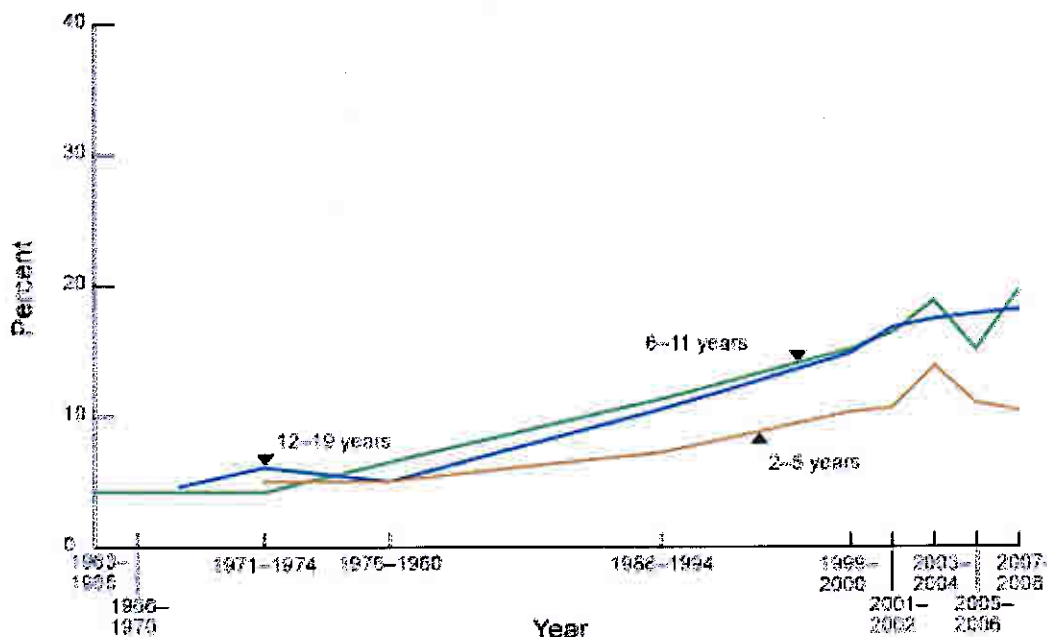
Keeping Kids Healthy - Physical Activity and Nutrition and Initiative

Brief History of Healthy Harford / Project Background

- Formed in 1993 – Harford County Health Department, Harford County Government, Upper Chesapeake Health; incorporated in 1995 as a 501(c)(3).
- Vision – to make Harford County the healthiest community in Maryland.
- Healthy Harford is the Healthy Communities Initiative of Harford County.
 - Works collaboratively to bring organizations (for-profit, not-for-profit, government agencies) together to work on health issues in the County.
- Community Health Assessment Project (CHAP)
 - Household survey designed to assess the overall health status of Harford County residents based on key health indicators
 - Conducted in 1996, 2000, 2005 – 2010 now in process (results expected 12/31/10)
 - Community report cards and goals established – CHAP 2010 will tell us how we are doing
- Recognizing the impact of poor lifestyle choices and obesity on the development of chronic disease, a focus on improved nutrition and increasing physical activity became the primary focus of Healthy Harford in 2007.
- The focus of the initiative is policy change that results in sustainable change – “making the healthy choice the easy choice in Harford County” to support individual efforts.

Why is this initiative important for our children?

**Figure 1. Trends in obesity among children and adolescents:
United States, 1963–2008**



NOTE: Obesity is defined as body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to sex- and age-specific 95th percentile from the 2000 CDC Growth Charts.
SOURCES: CDC/NCHS, National Health Examination Surveys II (ages 6–11), III (ages 12–17), and National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES) I–III, and NHANES 1988–2000, 2001–2002, 2003–2004, 2005–2006, and 2007–2008.

Adoles =
30% obesity

- Childhood obesity is associated with various health-related consequences. Obese children and adolescents may experience immediate health consequences and may be at risk for weight-related health problems in adulthood.
- Obese children and teens have been found to have risk factors for cardiovascular disease (CVD), including high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, and abnormal glucose tolerance. In a population-based sample of 5- to 17-year-olds, 70% of obese children had at least one CVD risk factor while 39% of obese children had two or more CVD risk factors.
- Type 2 diabetes is increasingly being reported among children and adolescents who are obese. While diabetes and glucose intolerance, a precursor of diabetes, are common health effects of adult obesity, only in recent years has Type 2 diabetes begun to emerge as a health-related problem among children and adolescents. Onset of diabetes in children and adolescents can result in advanced complications such as CVD and kidney failure.
- Less common health conditions associated with increased weight include asthma, hepatic steatosis (fatty degeneration of the liver) and sleep apnea.

What is the nutrition and physical activity initiative?

- Two groups were formed to oversee the *development of a comprehensive Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan for Harford County* that establishes key priorities, goals, and objectives with a focus on reducing the rates of obesity, reducing the incidence of chronic disease, and improving the overall health of the community. The two groups are:
 1. **Nutrition and Physical Activity Community Action Team** – this team has met monthly over the past 18 months and has completed a comprehensive community assessment related to physical activity and nutrition; they have also supported many education programs and initiatives to raise awareness in the community.
 2. **Advisory Board** – the Board was formed recognizing that oversight for this project was critical in insuring that the Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan that is ultimately developed is aligned with key community and organizational priorities. This Board oversees the work of the Team and will be the approving Board for the final Plan.
- In January 2011, the Advisory Board will commence a strategic planning process to prioritize issues to be addressed, develop goals and objectives, and develop an action plan. They will remain as oversight for this initiative.
- The Community Action Team will be responsible for implementation of the Action Plan.